

N^o. 29

AN

ANSWER

*This Book belongs to Brighthelm's
Monthly Meeting*

TO

A PAMPHLET

Lately PRINTED at

EDINBURGH,

INTITULED,

BAPTISM with WATER

AND

Infant-Baptism asserted.

WHEREIN,

by Joseph Besse

The *Mistakes* of its Author are
Rectified, and his *Reasonings*
Confuted.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

UPON a serious Perusal of a Pamphlet lately printed at Edinburgh, intituled, Baptism with Water, and Infant-Baptism asserted; I could not but apprehend, that there was much amiss in it, that the Author had not reason'd well on some Points, and quite mistaken others: For which Cause I have thought meet to discover my different Sentiments. As that Author has conceal'd his Name, so neither shall I publish mine: The Arguments on both Sides will suffer nothing by that, but may come the fairer on the Carpet, when the preconceiv'd Abilities of either of the Authors can have no Influence on the Reader's Judgment.

Tho' I am sensible, our Opponent has a very considerable Advantage, in that Custom and Education have prepossess'd great Numbers in Favour of the Cause he espouses. However, I have adventur'd to oppose my Thoughts to his, not without Hope, that the Superior Force of Scripture and Reason, both which I think to be on my Side, will gradually dispel the Mists of Tradition, and illuminate the Minds of many to the Acknowledgment and Obedience of the Truth.

24 MA 59

Prove all Things, hold fast that which is good.

A N
A N S W E R
T O
A P A M P H L E T, &c.

THE Occasion of this *Edinburgh* Author's appearing in Print, was, it seems, a *Letter* address'd to the *Clergy* of *Northumberland*, which, he tells his Reader, is a *very weak Pamphlet*, though it had been more for the Credit of his own Performance to have confuted a strong one.

He next describes it, *as a Sort of Challenge of Defiance*. As if indeed the Letter-Writer were very insolent, who dar'd to express himself thus, *Letter*, p. 6. *I call upon the most learned among you to prove from Scripture, That sprinkling Infants on their Foreheads with a little Water is the Baptism*
of

of Christ, instituted by him, and practised by his Apostles. Can the Clergy take Offence at this? Can they be angry with a Man for exciting them to a *Work*, which, if effectually perform'd, would very much conduce both to their *Honour* and *Interest*?

He proceeds; *The Author, I am told, is a Pedlar.* What then? Search his Pack; question the Vendibility of his Wares; persuade the Country not to deal with him: *He will make but a sorry Chapman.* In short, Starve the silly Heretick, and let his weak Arguments perish with him. This is unkind, not to say, unchristian.

He adds, *One would have reasonably thought, that a Man that had made so bold a Challenge, should have endeavoured to answer every Thing that had been said in Defence of Baptism with Water.* Which Thought of his is altogether unreasonable, because most of the Arguments for Water-Baptism, have no Relation to the Point propos'd

propos'd to the Clergy, which was, to prove
that sprinkling of Infants was instituted by
Christ.

He says, p. 4. *Whether I be of the Clergy*
or Laity, it matters not much. Just as much
 as whether the Letter-Writer were a *Pedlar*;
 upon the meer Report of which he has cast
 out his mean Reflections. Should the
 same Report be rais'd of himself, the Su-
 periority of his Arguments would not con-
 fute it.

From his *Preface* we pass to the Work
 it self, which begins p. 5. with the *Qua-*
kers Tenet about *Baptism*, which he says,
is, That Christ did not institute any Baptism
with Water, but only Baptism with the Holy
Ghost.

In Order to impugn this *Tenet*, he be-
 gins with a Mistake, and tells us, p. 6.
that to baptize in its Original Meaning sig-
nifies no more than to wash. Whereas the
 Original Meaning of that Word is to *dip* or
plunge; and though it does sometimes sig-
 nifie

nifie *no more* than to *wash*, yet it remains for him to shew, that it ever signifies *less* than to *wash*; otherwise *Sprinkling* will be still excluded.

From his *General Sense* of the Word, he goes on to a *Separate Ecclesiastick Sense*, in which, he says, *Baptism is now always taken, and denotes a Person's being received into the Christian Church, by being wash'd with Water in the Name of the Trinity.*

He knows, the *Quakers* don't take it in that Sense, and therefore his *Separate Ecclesiastick Sense* amounts to no more than the *Sense* of those Churches, who either practise or profess *Water-Baptism*. But that we may know whether their *Sense* be the *Gospel-Sense* of Baptism, let us search the Scriptures, to find what that is.

The Words *Baptize* and *Baptism* are us'd in the New-Testament in a two-fold *Sense*, either *Literal* or *Figurative*. *Literal*, when they relate either to those Legal Purifications

Purifications and diverse Washings us'd among the *Jews* under the *Mosaic* Dispensation, or to that *Water-Baptism* which was administred either by *John* the Baptist, or some of the Disciples of Christ, both before and after his Ascension. * *Figurative*, when they denote that Inward Purgation and Cleansing of the Soul from Sin, by the Power and Operation of the Holy Spirit, which is the true *Christian Baptism*.

The Word *Baptize* is us'd in both Senses by *John* the Baptist, *Luke* iii. 16. *Literally*, when he says, *I indeed baptize you with Water*; *Figuratively*, when speaking of Christ, he adds, *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*.

'Tis also us'd in both Senses by Christ himself, *Acts* i. 5. *Literally*, *John truly baptized with Water*: *Figuratively*, *But ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*.

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That

* They are us'd also figuratively by our Saviour, to denote a *State* of Suffering for the *Testimony* of Truth, as *Mat.* xx. 22, 23. *Luke* xii. 50.

That *Baptizing* in this Figurative Sense doth denote Inward Purgation, is evident, by the Explication given of it, by *John* the Baptist, *Luke* iii. 17. *Whose Fan is in his Hand, and he will thoroughly purge his Floor, and will gather the Wheat into his Garner, but the Chaff will be burn with unquenchable Fire.*

And the manifest *Antithesis*, us'd both by the Baptist and Christ himself, between *Water* and the *Holy Ghost*, doth effectually confute our Adversary's Assertion, p. 8. That *there was not any Difference between John's Baptism, and that of the Jews, or that of Christ, as to the Matter, but that they all baptiz'd with Water.*

This *Baptism* with the *Holy Ghost* is that *Gospel-Baptism*, which Christ commissioned his Disciples, through their Preaching, to administer, *Mat.* xxviii. 19. *Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

To qualifie them for so important a Service, they were commanded *to wait at Jerusalem for the Promise of the Father*, Acts i. 4. to wit, the Effusion, or pouring forth, of the Holy Spirit, prædicted by the * Prophets of old, which was to come upon all Flesh; that themselves being in a remarkable Manner first baptiz'd therewith, and having receiv'd the † Power of the Holy Ghost coming upon them, might be instrumental in the Hand of God to confer upon others also the Gift of the Holy Ghost, the Promise whereof, Peter at that Time, (far from restricting it to himself and his Fellow Apostles) told the amazed Multitude, *was unto them, and to their Children, and to all that were afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Acts ii. 39.

The Apostle Paul, afterwards miraculously converted, received from Christ the

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same

* *Isaiah* xliv. 3. *Joel* ii. 28.

† *Δύαμιεν ἐπὶ ἅσιν τοις τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι.* Acts. 8.

same Commission for Substance, though in other Words, viz. *I have appeared unto thee for this Purpose, to make thee a Minister and a Witness both of these Things which thou hast seen, and of those Things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the People, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, that they may receive Forgiveness of Sins, and Inheritance among them which are sanctified by Faith that is in me.* Acts xxvi. 16, 17, 18.

This Apostle's Commission was as extensive as that of the others, for he says of himself, *I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles,* 2 Cor. xii. 11. and is plainly comprehensive of the Baptism of the *Holy Ghost*, though the Word *Baptizing* be not exprest. As to *Water-Baptism*, himself expressly declares, *Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel,* 1 Cor. i. 17.

That the *Baptism* of the *Holy Ghost* was conferred through the Preaching of the Apostles, is manifest, by the Relation *Peter* gives of the Conversion of *Cornelius* and his Friends, *Acts xi. 15. As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the Beginning: Then remembered I the Word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with Water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.*

Having thus briefly shown the *Gospel-Sense* of *Baptism*, we shall return to our Author, and examine what he has to say in behalf of his *Ecclesiastick Sense*.

He tells us p. 6, 7. that the *Jews* had diverse *Baptisms* or *Washings*, with *Water*; a Thing we had no Doubt of, for the Apostle *Paul* had told us so before, and ranks them with *Carnal Ordinances* imposed on them until the Time of Reformation. *Heb. ix. 10.*

He also tells us p. 8. That *John's Baptism* was with *Water*. So far he is right:

But

But then he is pleas'd to add, *That there was not any Difference between John's Baptism, and that of the Jews, or that of Christ, as to the Matter, for they all baptiz'd with Water.* This we cannot receive, and therefore must attend to his Proofs.

First then, he asserts p. 9. *That when our Saviour instituted Baptism, he did no more than adopt a Jewish Custom into his Religion; and that Christ in his Wisdom thought fit to make former Rites serve his divine Purposes, rather than to introduce new Ones unheard of before, and therefore translated this Rite of Baptism, in Use among the Jews, into his own Service, and so ordain'd it a Sacrament of his Religion.*

A strange Assertion! As if Christ, the Author of a Religion purely spiritual, had been under a Necessity either of introducing new Rites and Ceremonies, or of borrowing old Ones from the Jews. Had this Assertor well consider'd *John iv. 23, 24. The Hour cometh, and now is, when the true*
Worshippers

Worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth, he might easily have perceived, that this Spiritual Worship established by Christ stands in Need of no Jewish Rites or Ceremonies, and that therefore he has translated none of them into his Service.

The next *Position* he advances p. 9. is, *That all that were admitted into Christ's Religion were to be baptiz'd with Water.* In favour of this *Darling Notion*, he thinks, that *the Disciples who were the first Profelytes to that Religion, must have been baptized likewise, and who, says he, was there then to do it, but Christ himself? And of this Opinion, he says, was St. Augustin.* With this think so of his own, and *St. Augustin* at his Elbow, he confronts the Text *John iv. 2.* which says, that *Jesus baptized not, but his Disciples.* Now, if it be true what he

he insinuates, that there was none to baptize the Disciples but Christ himself ; and if (notwithstanding his and *St. Augustin's* Opposition) we will believe the Text, that *Jesus baptized not*, it necessarily follows, that the Disciples were not baptized with Water at all, and consequently his favourite Notion falls to the Ground, seeing they were admitted into Christ's Religion without being so baptized.

He then urges, that *Our Saviour's Disciples in his Life-time did baptize with Water*, for which he supposes they had a Commission, but cannot find any. We, on the contrary, suppose, that had they had such a Commission, the Text would not have been silent in so material a Point ; and that therefore they did baptize with Water both before and after Christ's Ascension, without any Commission from him for that Purpose, but in compliance with the then received Custom among the *Jews*, and the known Practice of *John the Baptist*,

nor does any Thing our Adversary advances prove the contrary ; so far from that, that he tells us, p. 11. That *since the Spirit was not given in Christ's Life-time*, he thinks, *it will plainly follow, that there was a Baptism with Water practis'd by our Saviour's Disciples without the Spirit*, and then produces several Instances after Christ's Ascension, of which he says, p. 12. *these were baptized without having the Holy Ghost convey'd along with their Baptism*. In this he seems to give up his Cause, since it plainly follows, that the Apostles in so baptizing acted without a Commission, unless he will say that Christ commission'd them to baptize without the Spirit, which we suppose he will not, for he says, p. 23. *That there is with the Outward Washing an Inward Baptism of the Spirit conveyed to us*, and p. 24. that, *no doubt, we may be said to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, when this Rite is duly perform'd*. If so, 'twill necessarily follow, that the Apostles in baptizing

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tizing with Water without the Spirit did not duly perform that Rite: And certainly in an undue Performance of it, they acted not by Christ's Commission.

He says, p. 12. that *Baptism is now become necessary to our Entering into the Christian Church*, and then takes upon him to correct our common Version of the Text *Mat. xxviii. 19.* by rendring it thus, *Go, and make Disciples of all Nations, washing, (for so, says he, the Word in the Greek imports) or baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.* The imaginary Advantage he draws from thus rendring the Text, he afterwards expresses p. 17. *As Christ's Commission, says he, when literally rendred signifies to wash in the Name of the Father, &c. This can have Relation to nothing else but Water. For Water being the Matter whereby Washing is perform'd, whenever therefore we are commanded to wash, that without all doubt is to be made Use of, and so, though Water is not expressly*
set

set down in our Saviour's Commission, yet, since Washing is, Water by an unavoidable consequence must be the Matter to be made Use of, and therefore Baptizing with Water, though Water be not literally exprest, must be the true Meaning of Christ's Commission.

A meer groundless Conceit! For washing in Scripture does not always relate to Water, but is frequently us'd in a figurative Sense, as in the following Instances.

Psal. xxvi. 6. *I will wash my Hands in Innocency.* li. 2. *Wash me thoroughly from mine Iniquity.* lviii. 10. *He shall wash his Feet in the Blood of the Wicked.*

Isaiah i. 15. *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes.*

Jeremy. iv. 14. *O Jerusalem, wash thine Heart from Wickedness.*

Acts xxii. 16. *Wash away thy Sins.*

Job. xxix. 6. *When I washed my Steps with Butter.*

Prov. xxx. 12. *There is a Generation*

that is pure in their own Eyes, and yet is not washed from their Filthiness.

Titus iii. 5. *The Washing of Regeneration.*

Rev. i. 5. *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood.*

vii. 14. *Have washed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.*

Seeing therefore, that *washing* is frequently us'd in a figurative Sense in Scripture, we are under no Necessity of taking it otherwise, though we should admit him to make Use of it in this Place.

P. 13. He says, *What Circumcision was to the Jews, that Baptism is to Christians.* Now if he will understand *Baptism* to be *Circumcision* in a Gospel-Sense, the Apostle Paul will tell him what that is, Rom. ii. 29. *He is a Jew which is one inwardly, and Circumcision is that of the Heart in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose Praise is not of Men, but of God.* This Gospel Sense of Circumcision, doth not at all answer to
Baptism

Baptism with Water, but is exactly correspondent with the *Baptism of the Holy Ghost* which we contend for.

He adds, that *whoever is not baptized, must needs be a Stranger to the Covenant of Promise*. Not considering, that 'tis the *Baptism of the Holy Ghost*, which our Saviour himself expressly calls, *The Promise of the Father*. Acts i. 4. Luke xxiv. 49.

He then produces the Text *John iii. 5. Except any one be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*. This he would have understood of *Water-Baptism*, though he knows * *diverse Learned Men* take it otherwise, viz. *That Water and the Spirit in this Place do only denote the Spirit and its cleansing Virtue*. Which Opinion is most strongly supported by Christ himself, who in the same Discourse, Ver. 6, 8. twice repeats the Term *born*

* Whom he mentions p. 30. under the Name of *Calvin* and his Followers.

born of the Spirit, without any mention of *Water*.

His Instance, p. 14. of *Philip's* baptizing the Eunuch with Water, proves nothing, since that was done at the *Eunuch's* Instance, not by Christ's Commission.

His other Remark, p. 17. of *Peter's* baptizing *Cornelius* and his Friends, after they had received the Holy Ghost, does no more infer the *Necessity* of *Water-Baptism*, than *Paul's* circumcising *Timothy* doth infer the *Necessity* of *Circumcision*. The Text expressly says, *Acts* xvi. 3. That *Paul* took and circumcised *Timothy* because of the Jews that were in those Quarters. So also in the Case of *Cornelius* and his Friends, the Text says. that they of the Circumcision which believed, were astonished, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the Gift of the Holy Ghost. For though those Jews had receiv'd the Christian Faith, yet did they retain some of their former Prejudices: Now it having been a received Custom among

mong them to baptize Profelytes with Water: *Peter* propos'd to them this Question, *Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?* And when none of the *Jews* did contradict it, he commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord. So that 'tis evident, *Peter* did not command them to be baptized because of the absolute Necessity of Water-Baptism, but for the sake of those believing *Jews*, who were yet so strongly attach'd to their old *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, that some of them at that Time thought it unlawful to eat with Men uncircumcised. And for a considerable time after, there were of the believing *Pharisees* who said, that 'twas needful, not only to baptize, but even to circumcise the Gentiles, and command them to keep the Law of Moses.

Acts xv. 5.

From this Passage concerning *Cornelius* we have farther to observe, that *Peter* was not sent to baptize *Cornelius* with Water,
but

but to *preach the Gospel* to him. This is evident, 1st. from the Words of the Angel to *Cornelius*, *He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.* Acts x. 6. 2dly. From the Saying of the Messengers sent from *Cornelius* to *Peter*, who did their Errand by telling him, that *Cornelius* had been warned of God by an holy Angel to send for him, and to hear Words of him. Ver. 22. 3dly. From the Words of *Cornelius* himself to *Peter*, *Thou hast well done that thou art come, now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all Things that are commanded thee of God.* Ver. 33.

Now when *Peter* opened his Mouth, and preached to them the Gospel of Christ, in his Discourse he mentions the Commission given to himself and the other Disciples, from our Saviour after his Resurrection, in these Words, *He commanded us to preach unto the People, and to testify, that it was he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead. To him give all the Pro-*
phets

them to be baptiz'd with Water: For
 according to Christ's Precept, he taught
 baptizing. While he yet spake, the Holy
 Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word.
 Acts x. 44. This Peter himself in the next
 Chapter interprets to be the Baptism of the
 Holy Ghost: And as I began to speak, the
 Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the Be-
 ginning. Then remembred I the Word of the
 Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized
 with Water, but ye shall be baptized with the
 Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them
 the like Gift as he did unto us, who believed
 on the Lord Jesus Christ: what was I, that
 I could withstand God? Acts xi. 15, 16, 17.
 As then, 'tis not doubted, that Peter did
 preach to those Gentiles by Virtue of Christ's
 Commission, Mat. xxviii. so certainly the
 Baptism, which accompanied his Preaching,
 must be the Baptism there intended. His
 commanding them therefore afterward to
 be baptized with Water, was for the
 Reason

Reason we have before shewn, and had no Relation to Christ's Precept.

Besides, that *Peter* did not take Christ's Commission literally to relate to *Water-Baptism*, and a Form of Words to be us'd in the Administration of it, is manifest, in that he commanded those *Gentiles* to be baptized *in the Name of the Lord*, not *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, which Form, our Adversary says, p. 9. *'twas necessary the Gentiles should be baptized in*: His Words are these, *But they*, (our Saviour's Disciples) *used another Form indeed when they baptized the Gentiles, for as there was no Controversy with them, who was the true Messiah, but who was the true God, it was necessary that they should be baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* An Assertion, which, if true, would have favour'd his Cause, but unless he can produce a single Instance from Scripture, of the Apostles using that Form in baptizing, the

same Assertion can serve only to shew, that himself has less Zeal for Truth than for *Water-Baptism*. The *Quakers* do far more justly argue, that since by all the Scripture Instances we have of the Disciples baptizing with Water, it appears, that they did not use the Form of Words express in Christ's Commission ; that therefore they did not understand that Commission to relate to *Water-Baptism*, nor did they practise it by Virtue thereof.

The Assertor comes at length, p. 16. to quote the Letter-writer, concerning whom he thus queries, *Does not the Author of the Pamphlet now under Consideration say, That John Baptist was sent to baptize with Water : But we don't read in the New-Testament, that Christ instituted a Water-Baptism distinct from John Baptist: And there was a Commission given to the Apostles, to Go and Teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, &c. but there is not one Word of Water in this Commission.* These
says

says he, *are the Author's Words, now in Answer to them, I say, as I did before, and then goes on, p. 16, 17, 18. repeating the Substance of what he had before said concerning the Sameness of the Jewish, John's and Christ's Baptism; rendring the Word Baptize by the Word Wash; and the Practice of Philip and Peter; all which we have before fully replied to.*

He tells us, p. 18. that *Christ did not command any particular manner of baptizing with Water, but that the Apostles by the Tenor of their Commission, were only to wash or baptize in general, and whether this was done by Immersion or Dipping, or by Affusion or Sprinkling, it all answer'd the End of Baptism.*

We readily grant, that *Christ did not command any particular manner of Baptizing with Water: But certainly had he instituted any Water-Baptism at all, he would never have left it to be Matter of perpetual Dispute and Altercation, to whom, by whom, where, when, and after what Manner, it should*

should be administred. Can this Assertor shew us that ever any *External Rite* or *Ceremony* was enjoyn'd upon any People, and all those Matters left undetermined? If not, can he suppose that the Infinite Wisdom of Christ would enjoyn upon Mankind a Ceremony to be observ'd, and leave it involv'd in more Obscurity, than is consistent even with human Prudence? We, who can entertain no such dishonourable Thoughts of the Saviour of the World, make no doubt, but that if he had instituted *Water-Baptism* in the Place of *Circumcision*, he would have left it as clear and indisputable in every Circumstance of it's Administration, which seeing he did not, we must needs infer, that *he did not institute any Water-Baptism at all.*

Our Opponent's Discourse, p. 18, 19, 20. respecting the early and general Practice of *Immersion*, or *Dipping*, is so contrary to his Undertaking, of asserting *Infant-Baptism* by *Sprinkling*, that it justly entitles him

him to the Character of the foolish Woman describ'd by Solomon, Prov. xiv. 1. *Every wise Woman buildeth her House, but the foolish plucketh it down with her Hands.*

P. 20, 21. he puts this Query, *But do we not read, Mat. iii. 11. That John Baptist said, our Saviour would baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire? Now, if so, how comes Christ to institute another sort of Baptism (viz.) that with Water? In answer to which he says, p. 21. Now this Baptism with the Holy Ghost and with Fire, has, I think, no Relation to Baptism with Water, but is always understood by Learned Men, to refer to the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, in cloven Tongues as of Fire, upon the Day of Pentecost. Acts ii. 3. For Christ had commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father: For, John truly baptized with Water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many Days hence. Chap. i. 4, 5. It was but a short*
Time

Time after Christ said this, that it came to pass (for Pentecost was but fifty Days after our Saviour's Resurrection, and ten Days after his Ascension) and since in his own Words, it has the Denomination of a Baptism with the Holy Ghost, we may reasonably conclude, That 'tis the same Baptism which John and Christ refer to ; and as this Descent is call'd a Baptism with the Holy Ghost ; so why not the fiery cloven Tongues accompanying it, a Baptism with Fire : For they being here joined together according to the Prediction of John, they seem to have been a true Completion of it. Now, why this kind of Baptism peculiar to the Apostles, and fulfilled only in them, should be the only Baptism which Christ instituted, and should exclude that Baptism with Water, which was practised by the same Apostles in his Life-Time, and farther commanded after his Resurrection, I profess I cannot apprehend.

To this long Quotation, we distinctly answer, as follows ; Our Opponent thinks
that

that *this Baptism with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*, Mat. iii. 11. *has no Relation to Baptism with Water.* We think so too : But that this *Baptism with the Holy Ghost and with Fire* is *Christ's Baptism* is undeniable ; it then necessarily follows from our Adversary's own Concession, that *Christ's Baptism* has no Relation to *Baptism with Water.*

That the Words of Christ to his Disciples, *Acts i. 5. Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many Days hence, did refer to the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon them at the Day of Pentecost*, we admit. But that the Words of *John the Baptist*, Mat. iii. 11. *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*, are to be restricted to the same Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, can by no means be admitted without manifest Violence to the Text ; for his Words must of necessity relate to those Persons to whom he spake them : And who were they ? They were

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Pharisees,

* *Pharisees, Sadducees, § Publicans, † Soldiers*, in short, a mixt Multitude of all Sorts of People ; unto * *all* whom he said, *I indeed baptize you with Water unto Repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose Shoes I am not worthy to bear ; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire.*

Now as Christ's Words import, that the *Disciples* to whom he spake, were to be baptized with the *Holy Ghost*, so do *John the Baptist's* Words import, that *all Sorts of People*, to whom he spake, without Distinction, were to be baptized with the *same Baptism*.

For, the *Baptism of the Holy Ghost*, or *Effusion of the Spirit*, (call'd also, the *Promise of the Father*) was not peculiar to the *Apostles*, as our Adversary supposes, but a *common and universal Privilege* to all *Believers*.

* Mat. i. 3. 7. § Luke iii. 12. † Luke iii. 14. * Luke iii. 16

lievers under the Gospel Dispensation.
 This is manifest, not only by the Words of
John the Baptist before cited, but from the
 Prophecy of *Joel* cited by *Peter* Acts ii. 17.
And it shall come to pass in the last Days,
saieth God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon
all Flesh, &c. This pouring out of the Spirit,
Peter not only applies to what came upon
 the Disciples at the Day of *Pentecost*; but
 calls it *the Gift of the Holy Ghost, the pro-*
mise whereof, he tells the Multitude, a-
*mong whom were * Men out of every Nati-*
on under Heaven, was, unto them, and to
their Children, and to all that are afar off,
even as many as the Lord our God shall call.
 Acts ii. 38, 39. So that 'tis, as 'our Op-
 ponent says, *the same Baptism which John*
and Christ refer to; for the Gift or Pouring
 forth of the Spirit on Believers under the
 Gospel, is *One Baptism*, however dispensed

* Acts ii. 5.

to different Persons at distant Times and Places, which *One Baptism* is common to all the *Faithful*, tho' administred to the Disciples at the Day of *Pentecost* in a peculiar manner.

But our Opponent will have it, that the Text *Mat. iii. 11.* is always understood by learned Men to refer to the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles ¶ in cloven Tongues as of Fire, upon the Day of *Pentecost*. Again, he says, *As this Descent is called a Baptism with the Holy Ghost, so why not the fiery cloven Tongues accompanying it, a Baptism with Fire? For they being here join'd together, according to the Prediction of John, they seem to have been a true Completion of it.*

That the Words of *John the Baptist*, cannot in any reasonable Construction be so taken,

* Here he deviates from the Text to serve his own Purpose: for the Text does not say that the Holy Ghost descended in cloven Tongues, but that there came a Sound from Heaven as of a mighty rushing Wind, and it filled all the House where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven Tongues.

taken, we have already shewn, but since he seems to insist upon the Word *Fire* and the *Opinion* of his *learned Men*, we proceed to shew farther Cause of our Dissent from him and them.

1. If the Word *Fire*, *Mat. iii. 11.* be taken literally, as he * would have it, it was not so fulfill'd in the Appearance of the *cloven Tongues*; for they were not literally *Fire*, but *like as of Fire*. *Acts ii. 3.*

2. But that the Word *Fire* in that Place (viz. *Mat. iii. 11.*) is not to be so taken, we shall prove, by shewing that neither did *John* the Baptist use it in a literal Sense, nor did either our Saviour himself, or the Evangelists *John* and *Mark*, so understand it.

1. That *John* the Baptist did not use the Word *Fire* literally, but figuratively, denoting

* *For, he says, p. 23.* We don't read that Christ did ever literally fulfil this Part of *Isaiah's* Prophecy, but in the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles in *cloven Tongues as of Fire*.

noting thereby the purifying Virtue of the Holy Spirit, is manifest by his own immediate Explication of it, in these Words, *Whose Fan is in his Hand, and he will thoroughly purge his Floor, and gather his Wheat into the Garner: but he will burn up the Chaff with unquenchable Fire.*

2. Our Saviour himself, plainly referring to the Words of *John*, mentions not the Term *Fire*, but says, *Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.* Acts i. 5.

3. *John* the Evangelist, relating the Record which *John* the Baptist bare concerning Christ, has these Words, *He that sent me to baptize with Water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which * Baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* John i. 33.

4. The

* The Word *Baptizeth* here, in the present Tense, seems to denote that Christ did then baptize with the Holy Ghost, which was long before the Effusion of the Spirit upon the Apostles at the Day of Pentecost.

4. The Evangelist *Mark* rehearses the Saying of *John* the Baptist thus, *I indeed baptize you with Water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.* Mark i. 8.

From all which we infer, that,

If *John* the Baptist had understood the Word *Fire* in a *literal* Sense, he would not have made another Explication of it.

If our Saviour, and the Evangelists *John* and *Mark*, had not understood *John* the Baptist's Meaning to have been fully exprest without the Word *Fire*, they would not have omitted it in their reciting him.

From what hath been said, we think it will plainly appear, That the *Baptism* of the *Holy Ghost* was the *One* and only *Baptism* instituted by Christ. That it was not *peculiar* to the Apostles, but a standing Privilege to all the Faithful under the Gospel Dispensation, one of the great Blessings of the New Covenant, and to continue to the End of the World: That this

Baptism is not a *washing* with *Water*, but the *cleansing* of the *Soul* from *Sin*, by the purifying *Virtue* of the *Holy Spirit*: That the *Apostles* were made *instrumental* in the *Hand* of *God* to confer this *Baptism* of the *Holy Ghost* on others; and that our *Adversary* has not prov'd that *Christ* did institute any *Baptism with Water*. *

However, since upon a mistaken *Presumption* that he has done that, he is pleas'd to proceed with what he calls *Proofs for baptizing Infants with Water*, we will also go on to enquire into the *Validity* of them.

He begins then with this *Query*, *What Proof have you from Scripture, for baptizing Infants*

* We may here take Notice of a *Reflection* thrown at us by our *Opponent*, p. 22. as if *Prejudice* and an *uncommon Way of Thinking* had warp'd or blinded our *Judgments*. Whereas he must think but little, who cannot see, that *Custom* and the *common Way of Thinking* are most liable to warp and blind *Men's Judgments*, and bring them under the *Power of Delusion*.

Infants with Water? Instead of a direct Answer to this, he tells us, that *The Subjects of this Baptism, whether Infants or adult Persons, are no Part of the Dispute between the Church of England and the Quakers.* Whereas we think, they cannot dispute long, before this Point will naturally come in; as for instance,

Suppose this our Opponent to be a Member of the *Church of England*, and only sprinkled in his Infancy:

He asserts, and perhaps imagines he can prove, that *Water-Baptism* was instituted by Christ; and that a Man can't be a Christian without it.

He tells a Quaker, that he is * no Christian, he has not been admitted by *Water-Baptism*. Can he blame the Quaker for retorting thus, *Shake Hands, Brother, neither hast thou.*

F

Does

* He says, p. 32. Our unchristianing the Quakers is just.

Does it not then become a proper Subject of Dispute between them, *Whether Sprinkling of Infants were that Water-Baptism which, he says, Christ instituted?* Because, unless that can be prov'd, the Quaker and himself are embarqued on one Bottom, and their Christianity, upon his own Principles, equally precarious.

No, says he, for if there was no Proof at all in Scripture for Infant-Baptism, the Quakers would be condemned. And upon the same Supposition how could himself be justified?

He adds, *And their putting the Argument on this footing is only to evade the force of such Proof as lies for Baptism with Water in general.*

This is a Mistake in fact; for the Quakers have never evaded, but have plainly answer'd all the Proofs, that have been advanced against them, in favour of *Water-Baptism.*

Having spent about a Page to shew us, that he had rather not dispute this Point ; yet finding, that he cannot fairly evade it, he starts the Question a second Time, *What Proof then have you in Scripture for Water-Baptism ?* But before he yet venture upon this knotty Question, he thinks proper to shew what kind of *Proof* the Church of England grounds some of her *Doctrines* and *Usages* upon, in Order whereto he quotes one of her Articles, the Words of which are these ; *Holy Scripture containeth all Things necessary to Salvation ; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be prov'd thereby, is not to be required of any Man, that it should be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation.* Now, he admits, that *Infant-Baptism* is not contained in Scripture, and that there is no direct Proof of it there. But then he tells us, p. 27. that notwithstanding there be no direct Proof in Scripture for some of the *Doctrines* and *Usages* of the Church of England,

yet if by good Consequence they can be made out, she thinks this sufficient for any Person to yield his Assent to, and to ground his Practice upon them. But then 'tis hop'd the Church will be so just as to allow every Person, whose Assent is required, to judge for himself, whether the Consequences drawn be good, and to determine his Assent or Dissent accordingly.

Upon this Presumption we shall proceed to examine, whether the Consequences our Adversary shall draw from Scripture be good, and such as we may reasonably assent to.

Having then stated his Question a third Time, p. 27. he begins to draw Inferences, From Genesis xvii. says he, *I think 'tis very plain, that Abraham's Children and their Posterity after them, all entred into Covenant with God by Circumcision.*

That God gave to Abraham and his Posterity the Covenant of Circumcision, by which they were obliged to circumcise their male Children,

Children when eight Days old, is granted. But how Children at that Age can be said to enter into Covenant, we see not; for *entring into Covenant*, doth import a free Act of the Party, and necessarily presupposes a Capacity of Understanding, making, performing, or breaking that Covenant: But that a Child of eight Days old hath any such Capacity, it lies upon our Adversary to prove: Till then, his Talk of *the Children of Christians* being equally capable of *entring into Covenant with those of the Jews*, can be of no force, seeing both of them are equally under a natural Incapacity for any such Thing.

The *Jews* had an express Command for *circumcising* their Children; *He that is eight Days old shall be circumcised among you, every Man-Child in your Generation.* Gen. xvii. 12. But have Christians any Command to baptize their *Children with Water*? If they have, let him produce it; if not, how unreasonable is it to infer, That because the

Jews

Jews circumcised their Children being commanded so to do, that therefore *Christians* must baptize their Children with Water, without any Command so to do.

We need say no more on this Point, because our Opponent seems sensible of the Irrationality of his Inference, and therefore puts his next Question thus, p. 28. *Have you any Texts of Scripture from which you rationally infer Infant-Baptism?* To this he answers, *This I think may be inferred from those Places, where mention is made of some Numbers or Households, which were all baptized together.* The Texts he produces are, *Mat. xxviii. 19. Go, and make Disciples of all Nations, baptizing them. Acts xvi. 15, and 33. That Lydia was baptized and her Household, and, that the Jailor was likewise baptized and all his. And, 1 Cor. i. 16. That Paul baptized the Household of Stephanas.* Now, says he, we must imagine, that either there were no Children in these Families, or else that they were baptized.

The

The Text *Mat. xxviii. 19.* he renders thus, *Go, and make Disciples of all Nations, baptizing them,* with a Design to infer that Infants may be made Disciples by being baptized with Water without teaching: But his Policy therein is frustrated, by the Text it self; for if he will please to read the Commission through, he will find, in the Beginning of the next Verse, that the Word * *Teaching* is applied to the Subjects of Baptism in such wise as his best Skill in *Greek* can't alter it.

The Text *Acts xvi. 15.* relating to the Baptism of *Lydia* and her Household, will do him no Service; for the preceding Words are, that *she attended unto the Things which were spoken by Paul.* So, no doubt, did her Household also; but Infants were not capable of so doing, therefore not included.

The

The Instances of the *Jailor*, and all his, being baptized, *Acts xvi 33.* is not to the Purpose, for the Words immediately preceding are, *They [Paul and Silas] spake unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his House.* Is it reasonable to think that they preached to new born Infants? *but how on grounds not mentioned*

The Text *1 Cor. i. 16.* *And I baptized also the Household of Stephanas,* proves nothing in the present Case, since what *Paul* did in baptizing them, he declares, that *Christ* did not send him to do.

And indeed, 'tis not possible that any rational Inference in favour of *Infant-Baptism* can be drawn from any of these three Family Texts, because 'tis altogether uncertain whether any Infants were in them or no: And from such doubtful Premises no just Conclusion can be made.

Our Opponent goes on p. 28. and says, *Infant-Baptism may be inferr'd from 1 Cor. vii. 14. For the unbelieving Husband is sanctified*

sanctified by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife by the Husband, else were your Children unclean, but now are they holy. This Text seems against him, for if their Children were holy, why should they be baptized? But, says he, before Baptism they could not be holy, for by Nature they were born in Sin, and Children of Wrath, Eph. ii. 3. But are now by Baptism become holy and Children of Grace, which otherwise they would not have been.

Here he misinterprets the Text *Eph. ii. 3.* which doth not say *born in Sin*. We shall recite it with the foregoing Verses, *And you hath he quickned who were dead in Trespasses and Sins, wherein in Time past ye walked, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit that now worketh in the Children of Disobedience. Among whom also we all had our Conversation in Time past, in the Lusts of our Flesh, fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind, and were by Nature the Children of Wrath even as others.*

Now by *Nature* in this Place is not to be understood a *State of Infancy*, but an *habitual Course* of actual Transgression wherein they had lived, in which they were *ἔκκατοι ἐν ᾧ* *Children in the Nature of Wrath*, and dead in Trespasses and Sins. But God, saith the Apostle, *who is rich in Mercy*, for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, bath quickned us together with Christ, (by Grace ye are saved.) He that shall well consider both this Text, and the Context, will find, that it hath no manner of Relation either to *Infants* or *Water-Baptism*, however some *Pædo-baptists* prejudiced in favour of their own Opinion, may have misunderstood it.

Again, says our Opponent, *Infant-Baptism* may be inferr'd from *Mat. xix. 14.* *Suffer little Children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Upon which he observes, *If therefore, says he, Children were pronounced*
Subjects

Subjects of this Heavenly Kingdom, and were capable of entering into it, they consequently had a Right to the first Mean, and that was Baptism. But certainly, say I, if Children were pronounced Subjects of this Heavenly Kingdom, and were capable of entering into it, they could never be put into a better State by Water-Baptism.

The next Text he produces is *John iii. 5. Except any one be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he can't enter into the Kingdom of God.* That this Text cannot serve his Purpose, because it has no Relation to material Water, we have before shewn, p. 17. to which we refer him.

Last of all, he says, *Infant-Baptism may be inferred from Acts ii. 38, 39. For Peter said to those present, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost; for the Promise is unto you and to your Children.*

We are under no Necessity to understand this Text of Water-Baptism, because the Word *baptized* may be understood of *Conversion of the Heart* to God: This Interpretation is most agreeable to the Words of the same Apostle *Peter* in the next Chapter, Acts iii. 19. *Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out.* However the Word *Repent* shews that *Peter* did not speak to new born Infants. But, says our Adversary, here I think is a plain Text, intimating that *Children* are capable of being baptized, for if they had not, *Peter* would never have taken in *Children* along with Others; he would not have comprehended them with their Parents. In this, I think, he is fallacious, and would impose upon his Reader, because *Children* in that Place, does not signify *Infants*, but *Posterity* in general.

Having now thoroughly examin'd whatsoever I thought had the Appearance of Argument in the Pamphlet under Consideration, I trust, it will appear, that the

Author

Author has not prov'd, that *Water-Baptism* was instituted by *Christ*, nor has he made good any one of the Points which he has too confidently affirmed, p. 31, 32. that is to say, he has not prov'd, 1st. That *Infant-Baptism* is agreeable to a Gospel Institution; nor 2dly, That it was practis'd by the *Apostles*; nor 3dly, That any Men now have a divine Authority to practise it; nor 4thly, That it is any other than a meer human Tradition; nor 5thly, That it ought to be practis'd by good Christians; nor 6thly, That the Quakers are in the wrong for not practising it; nor 7thly, That they are in any wise less Christians than those that do.

As to his Translation from *Lightfoot's Horæ Hebraicæ*, it concerns us not, because 'tis grounded, as we think, upon an erroneous Supposition, viz. That *Christ* made *Water-Baptism* an Evangelical Sacrament.

Nor does his Story of the Conversion of a noted *Antipædobaptist* in the least affect us, who could tell him of several honest and

Learned

Learned *Pædo-baptists*, who after thorough Examination of the Arguments on both Sides, in the Fear of God, and with due Regard to the holy Scriptures, have become downright honest-hearted *Quakers*. And so we shall conclude, with wishing him the same Happiness.

F I N I S.

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N. B. *The Objections against the Letter-Writer, in A Vindication of Bishop TAYLOR, will be shortly repl'd*
to.
